

STURMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL



Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1969

Medical Officer of Health: ESTHER JACKSON, M.B. , CH.B. , D.P.H.

Chief Public Health Inspector: F. HODSON, F.A.P.H.I. , M.I.P.H.E. , M.R.S.H.

58 Green Close
Sturminster Newton
Dorset

June 1970

To: The Chairman and Members,
Sturminster Rural District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit to you the Annual Report
for the year 1969.

The report is prepared and will be circulated in
accordance with the requirements of the Public Health Officers Regulations,
1959.

Dr. Noel F. Pearson was your Medical Officer of Health
until the 20th November 1969, so this is largely his Report. Mr. Hodson,
your Senior Public Health Inspector, has, as usual, prepared the section of
the Report dealing with that part of the work with which the Public Health
Inspector is primarily concerned.

I have the honour to be,

Your Obedient Servant,

Medical Officer of Health

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STURMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR 1969.

A. Area 45,364 acres.

Rateable value: 1st April 1969 £250,257
Production of a penny rate 1969/70 £ 1,033

VITAL STATISTICS for the year 1969 as supplied by the Registrar General

Population (Registrar General's mid year Estimate) 10,530

<u>BIRTHS</u> registered	Male	1969		1968
		Female	Total	Total
Live Births Total	71	58	129	140
Legitimate	67	55	122	136
Illegitimate	4	3	7	4
Still Births Total			1	2
Legitimate			1	2

<u>DEATHS</u> registered	Male	1969		1968
		Female	Total	Total
Total	82	91	173	166
Maternal deaths	-	-	-	-
Deaths of infants under 1 year of age: Total	2	0	2	3
Legitimate	2	0	2	
Under 4 weeks of age-Total	2	0	2	2
Under 1 week of age-Total	2	0	2	2

The succeeding table of figures shews the birth rates etc. for the Sturminster area and the rates for England and Wales for comparison.

	Sturminster Area	England & Wales
Live birth rate per 1,000 est. population	12.3	16.3
Area comparability factor	1.28	1.00
Local adjusted rate	15.7	16.3
Illegitimate live births as % of all live births	5	8
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total live and still births	8	13
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births	16	18
I.M.R of legitimate infants	16	17
I.M.R of illegitimate infants		25
Neonatal mortality rate (Deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 live born)	16	12
Early neonatal mortality rate (Deaths under 1 week per 1,000 live born)	16	10
Perinatal mortality rate (Still births and deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live and still births)	23	23
Deaths per 1,000 population	16.4	11.9
Area comparability factor	0.68	1.00
Local adjusted death rate	11.2	11.9

B. NATURE OF THE DISTRICT

This is principally an agricultural district, though there are two sawmills, a glove factory and two milk factories. There are one or two small industries at Stalbridge which have recently developed, one where coffins are made and another dealing with scrap metals. During the year the Council has been successful in attracting a new light industry at Butts Pond in Sturminster Newton in addition to the South Western Farmers agricultural machinery depot.

C. HEALTH SERVICES IN THE DISTRICT which are provided by the Regional Hospital Board and the County Council, etc.

Hospital coverage for the district is shared by the Yeatman Hospital at Sherborne, the Dorset County Hospital (both of the West Dorset Hospital Group), together with the Blandford Hospital and the Poole General Hospital (of the Bournemouth and East Dorset Hospital Group) of the Wessex Regional Hospital Board.

LABORATORY SERVICES

The Public Health Laboratory Service has once again proved co-operative, helpful and efficient.

GENERAL MEDICAL PRACTITIONER, OPHTHALMIC AND PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES

These are administered locally by the Dorset Executive Committee.

COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICES

The personal preventive health services are the responsibility of the County Council.

They comprise the care of mothers and young children, maternity, school health, prophylactic inoculation, home nursing, mental health, the ambulance service, the care and after care of the tuberculous, blind and handicapped, health education, the domestic home help service and the welfare of the aged.

Domestic Home Help Service

The assistance provided by the domestic home help service is of such incalculable benefit to the needy old people that it is difficult to recall how these people managed before this service was instituted.

But for this service, on which increasing demands are being made, many old people would be unable to survive in their own homes.

VOLUNTARY SERVICES

Acknowledgment must again be made to the excellent voluntary work carried out in the district by the British Red Cross Society, the Sturminster Voluntary Old People's Welfare Committee, the Sturminster Silver Thread Club, the Rotary Club and the W.R.V.S.

The latter provides a meals-on-wheels service, from which 80 old people benefitted compared with 73 during the preceding year. This is a most valuable service. Not only are the meals appreciated by the old people, but, even more, (one sometimes thinks) are the twice weekly visits by helpers who take the meals round.

A chiropody clinic, organised by the British Red Cross Society, is held at the County Clinic, Green Close, Sturminster Newton, each Thursday morning in the month, excepting the first Thursday.

D. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health - Noel F. Pearson, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.
(Part time) - until 20th November 1969;

- Esther Jackson, M.B., CH.B., D.P.H.
- from 20th November, 1969.

Your Medical Officer of Health also acts as Medical Officer of Health to four other District Councils in the North Dorset area and, as Senior Assistant County Medical Officer, to the Dorset County Council.

Public Health Inspector - Frank Hodson, F.A.P.H.I., M.I.P.H.E., M.R.S.H.
(Part time)

Clerical Assistance - Mrs. V. Donovan
Miss J. Heap (from 20th October 1969)

On the 19th November, the office of the Medical Officer of Health was moved from your Council offices to the County Council building in Green Close.

On the 1st October, your Senior Public Health Inspector took over additional duties as Surveyor.

The Council has decided to appoint an additional Public Health Inspector and this is being arranged on a part-time basis with the Borough of Shaftesbury.

Meat Inspection is at present carried out by Messrs. N. D. Coles and Partners.

WATER SUPPLY

During the year there was a reorganisation of Water Boards and the newly constituted Authority is the Dorset Water Board whose Headquarters are at Poole.

Household Supplies

Few houses in the district lack a piped water supply.

Private Water Supplies

STOKE WAKE - There has been more than the usual amount of trouble during the year and water has had to be carried to the Council's four houses at Kent View on 89 occasions. Arrangements have been made by the Dorset Water Board to lay a short length of main which will eventually form part of their new extensions in order to serve these four cottages, the Council paying the sum of £200 to defray interest charges on the necessary loan.

WOOLLAND - The supplies here, which are from a land spring, continue to be satisfactory in quantity and reasonable in quality.

GLANVILLES
WOOTON - There are a small number of farms and cottages still supplied by springs in the region of the Manor House, the quality of which varies considerably though I have had no complaints about quantity.

BELCHALWELL - Five dwellings are served by a spring supply which is often failing and of variable quality, though in this case the main source of supply can be supplemented by another in an emergency. At the present time, the Water Board's mains nearest to the properties are not sufficient to supply them since the pressure is inadequate but the new main referred to in the report on Stoke Wake will, when finally completed, make available a supply to these dwellings.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

All the major parishes have sewerage schemes. As reported in the 1968 Annual Report, the Moorside area of Marnhull is not satisfactorily drained.

During the year a short extension of the Council's sewers in Marnhull was completed at the southern end of Sackmore Lane.

There are no established nuisances within the district which call for the provision of new sewerage schemes which could be provided at a reasonable cost. There are, however, cases of rivers and streams pollution arising - which are referred to later.

The Council employs contractors to empty cess pools within the district and the Council's consulting engineers are preparing a scheme whereby the contents of cess pools and septic tanks can be disposed of into one of their sewage disposal works. Until this happens, the contents of cess pools and septic tanks are disposed of on farm land and this is undesirable, partly from a public health standpoint and also in relation to animal health. The Council has an old refuse tip at Fifehead Neville which can be used as a disposal site but the contractors, naturally, use the nearest site available to the tanks which are emptied.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

The collection of refuse is on a fortnightly basis throughout the district, and special collections of household refuse are made when a lorry is available. The Council has one 20 cubic yard Pakamatic vehicle and one 12 cubic yard side loader, the latter being 11 years old and to be replaced during 1970 with a larger and more modern type of vehicle. A small number of trade refuse collections are made and a special paper salvage collection is carried out from shops once a fortnight. The Council operates a kerbside collection but, in cases of old or infirm people, will collect from the rear of the premises on payment of 10/- per annum, though relatively few people take advantage of this.

The number of districts within the County of Dorset still only collecting refuse once a fortnight is diminishing rapidly and there is much room for improvement in our present collection and disposal system. This will, of course, incur extra cost and, bearing in mind that local government reorganisation is coming, I think the best way of improving matters would be for the five North Dorset authorities to combine together for this purpose. At the present time, with two vehicles and four men, it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide a good service, even on a fortnightly basis. Apart from periods of sickness, which cannot be predicted, each man is now entitled to up to three weeks holiday per annum and, although the Council has available a relief driver employed on sewerage and other general duties, the whole scheme is inflexible. This is particularly so because the modern automatic packing vehicles, which are now necessary to cope with the increasing amount of refuse, are liable to be off the road for longer periods for repair to the mechanism, with consequent serious disruption of the collections. No small Authority like ours can afford to keep a spare vehicle standing idle.... the Road Fund Licence alone makes this prohibitive. (In the case of our Pakamatic, which is only a small automatic type of vehicle, the annual Road Fund Licence is £229. 10. 0.)

SALVAGE

The Council runs a salvage scheme, 50% of the proceeds of this being available to the men as a bonus, but this does not seem to be encouraging them to collect very much salvage as the figures quoted below will indicate:

£39.	1.	2.
27.	0.	0.
3.	2.	6.
£69.	3.	8.

ROADSIDE SANITATION

We do not seem to have very much trouble arising at laybys in this district. At all the recognised laybys the County Council provides litter stands and these are emptied by our men when they pass the spot and also, as necessary, by the County Council's own vehicles.

RIVERS AND STREAMS POLLUTION

Several cases occurred during the year of stream pollution and these were mostly due to silage liquor. The worst case, and one which has re-occurred for a number of years, is at Stourton Caundle where a large farm adjoins the stream which then passes under the road and in front of the Trooper Inn. When pollution of this stream occurs, there is no better place than the local inn as a source of irate comment and, after much discussion, it has finally been agreed that the old stone culverts under the road shall be relaid and this will undoubtedly reduce the amount of smell nuisance. Even without silage, the natural drainage from a farmyard is bound to cause trouble when it flows under a long culvert with an irregular base which becomes in effect a kind of long septic tank. I am still of the opinion that the new culverts will not stop nuisance arising occasionally during the hot summer months from natural farm drainage, quite apart from silage. The Council has a small sewage scheme in this village but it is quite inadequate to take farm effluent.

OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

No. of inspectors appointed under the Act	1 (part time)
Estimated no. of premises subject to registration	71
No. of premises registered	68
No. of premises inspected	12
No. of inspections carried out	22

FACTORIES ACT, 1961

	No. of Premises on Register	Inspections	Written Notice	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	54	23	1	Nil
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	45	30	Nil	Nil
Total:	99	53	1	Nil

<u>Defects</u>	<u>Found</u>	<u>Remedied</u>
Want of cleanliness		
Sanitary conveniences:		
Insufficient		
Unsuitable/defective	3	2
	3	2

No. of outworkers (Glove making) 30

CLEAN AIR ACT, 1956

No action was called for or taken during the year.

RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES ACT

No premises in the district are registered under the Act.

SWIMMING BATHS

There are no swimming baths in the district to which the public have access but a number of private swimming pools are in use. Those at County Schools are supervised by the County Health Department.

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

One public convenience is provided by your Council in the car park at Sturminster Newton. Hand washing facilities (cold water) are supplied.

NOISE ABATEMENT ACT, 1960

Informal action was taken during the year in respect of various complaints regarding barking dogs, motor cycles, a diesel and gas compressor and from work at a garage.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS AND CAMPING SITES

There are three licensed caravan sites in the district: all these were for use by individual caravans. There are no large caravan sites in the district licensed by the District Council. Nine inspections were carried out.

VERMINOUS PREMISES

During the year, the following infestations have been dealt with:

Cockroaches	1)	Treatment by use of sprays and/or
Ants	4)	powders (proprietary brands)
Fleas	1)	

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

The North Dorset Joint Rodent Committee of which the Sturminster R.D.C. is one of the six constituent authorities continued to carry out the provisions of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949. The work was carried out under the supervision of the Senior Public Health Inspector at Sherborne U.D.C.

Treatments	307
Visits	1516

PET ANIMALS ACT, 1951

No. of licensed premises	2
No. of inspections made	7

ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS ACT, 1963

There is one premises registered under this Act in the district. Two inspections were carried out.

Under the Act, with certain limited exceptions, any person who carries on a business of providing accommodation for other people's animals, even in a private house, must be registered under this Act by the District Council.

SCHOOLS (INCLUDING SCHOOL CANTEENS)

Regular inspections of school canteens have shewn a consistently high standard of hygiene.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACTS, 1948 and 1951 - Section 47

Once again, no statutory notice was required to be taken during the year under these Acts for the compulsory removal of an old person requiring care and attention to an Institution.

HOUSING

No. of houses in the district at 1.4.69 3,722

Inspection of dwelling houses during the year

No. of dwelling houses inspected	174
No. of inspections made	350
No. of informal notices served	10
No. of informal notices complied with	6
No. of statutory notices served	1
No. of statutory notices complied with	house vacated
No. of houses reported under Section 16 of the Housing Act 1958	nil

Action taken by the local Authority in respect of such houses:

Demolition orders made	nil
Undertakings accepted for:	
Closure	nil
Reconditioning	nil
Other action	nil

No. of houses included in Clearance Areas during year nil

There is still a small number of cottages in this district which could be regarded as unfit and not repairable at a reasonable expense. Most of these are occupied by elderly people, usually owner/occupiers, and in these circumstances it is the Council's policy to take no action (except in case of emergency) until the premises become empty. Quite often such properties are bought by people who wish to recondition them at what would officially be an unreasonable expense and quite often very ^{good} properties are made which fit in far better with the rural scene than a more modern building.

During the year only one property was dealt with and an unofficial undertaking was given by the solicitors acting for the owner to the effect that the property would not be re-occupied until it was made fit.

Overcrowding

No case of statutory overcrowding was found during the year.

Slum Clearance

No action was taken to implement Section 13 of the Housing Act, 1964, toward the definition of Improvement Areas.

New Houses

No. of new dwellings provided by private enterprise during the year	82
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No. of new dwellings provided by the Local Authority during the year	8
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Houses Let in Lodgings

No houses are known to be let in lodgings.

Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954.

No applications were received during the year for certificates of disrepair under the above-mentioned Act.

Improvement Grants

17 applications were received during the year in respect of standard, and 3 in respect of discretionary, grants compared with 21 and 4 respectively during the preceding year.

The Housing Act, 1969, eased the conditions relating to improvement grants, particularly in relation to discretionary grants. It is now possible in these latter cases to make grant available for repair work up to 50% of the amount accepted for improvement work. Our own Council now makes grants of 40% of the approved expense which means a maximum of £800 instead of £1,000. There can be some reluctance on the part of local authorities to pay out large sums of money for the improvement of properties where the owners can dispose of them straight away without repayment of the grant but it is clearly the intention of the Ministry that the need to recondition substandard properties is of paramount importance and they are quite clearly hoping that local authorities will make the utmost use of the new procedures in order to achieve this end. The Council has restricted discretionary grants to houses which are owner/occupied, or are tenanted.

Re-housing

During the year, 62 applicants were housed by the Council. At the end of the year there were 113 applicants on the Waiting List, compared with 96 a year previously.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES

1. Milk

Milk & Dairies (General) Regulations, 1959

No. of dairies in the district subject to registration 5

No. of distributors subject to registration 12

Samples

To avoid duplication, routine sampling of milk in the district is carried out by officers of the County Council only. 48 samples were taken during the year by them.

Brucellosis

47 samples of milk were submitted by your officers for examination for Brucella infection. Routine examination of samples is made by the County staff and positive results notified. Three positive results in your district were notified during the year. Action was taken in advising the farmer to discontinue delivering his untreated milk and to send it instead for heat treatment which was complied with.

Milk & Dairies (General) Regulations, 1959 - Regulation 19-20

Proceedings were authorised in respect of a dirty milk bottle delivered in Marnhull.

2. Other Food Premises

The number of food premises in the area, by type of business subject to Food Hygiene (General) Regulations 1960:

Trade	No. of Premises	No. of Premises fitted to comply with Reg. 16.	No. of Premises to which Reg. 19 applies	No. of Premises fitted to comply with Reg. 19.
Hotels	5	5	5	5
Cafes	6	6	6	6
Public Houses	23	23	23	23
Clubs	2	2	2	2
Church Halls	4	3	3	3
Canteens - schools	11	11	11	11
Confectioners	2	2	2	2
Meat and Fish	10	10	10	10
Grocers	32	32	32	32
Mixed Stores	16	16	16	16
Boarding Schools	3	3	3	3
Food Factories	10	10	10	10
Others	6	3	3	3
Total:-	150	126	126	126

No. of such premises inspected during the year 85
No. of inspections carried out during the year 103

No. of food premises subject to registration under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, in respect of:

Ice Cream	46
Sausages and Prepared Meats	11
Fish and Chips	1

Food Inspection

35 inspections were made at butchers' shops and 132lbs of beef was condemned. 5 tins of food condemned.

79 swabbings of equipment were carried out; only 2 gave unsatisfactory results. These results are most satisfactory. The spot swabbing of equipment first started six years ago may well have resulted in greater care being given to such equipment.

INTENSIVE FARMING

One sample of pig slurry was sent for bacteriological examination and showed no presence of pathogenic organisms.

POULTRY INSPECTION

The following information is particularly asked for by the Ministry of Health:

No. of poultry processing premises within the district	3 (small uni
No. of visits to these premises	3
Total no. of birds processed during the year	not known
Type of birds processed, e.g. turkeys, ducks, hens, broilers, capons, etc	mainly hens and capons
Percentage of birds rejected as unfit for human consumption	not known
Weight of poultry condemned as unfit for human consumption	not known
Comments on poultry processing and inspection	nil

DISEASES OF ANIMALS (WASTE FOODS) ORDER, 1957

There are no licensed premises in the district.

MEAT INSPECTION

The meat inspection continued to be carried out by local Veterinary Surgeons on behalf of the Council.

There are two licensed slaughterhouses and one knacker's yard in the district.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTIONS (INCLUDING HOUSING) CARRIED OUT

Total no. of inspections (under all headings)	1,440
Total no. of informal notices served	36
Total no. of informal notices complied with	16
Total no. of statutory notices served	1
Total no. of statutory notices complied with	nil *
Total no. of prosecutions	nil

* House later vacated.

Carcases & Offal Inspected
and Condemned

1969

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Goats
Number killed	873	3929	3230	6507	214	120
Number inspected	873	3929	3230	6507	214	120
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	25	214	150	191	35	1
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	332	2536	98	3928	48	7
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuber- culosis and cysticerci	38.03	64.39	3.03	60.52	22.43	5.83
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	1	4	nil	nil	nil	nil
Carcases submitted to treat- ment by refrigeration	1	3	nil	nil	nil	nil
Generalised and totally condemned	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil

Swabs were taken on several occasions from slaughterhouse drains and two instances of salmonella were recorded.

E. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE

Other than Tuberculosis:

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Total cases notified</u>
Measles	84
Infective hepatitis	19
Scarlet Fever	2

<u>Tuberculosis</u>	<u>Respiratory</u>	<u>Non-Respiratory</u>
New cases notified	1	1

Food Poisoning

4 cases of food poisoning in this area were notified by a local doctor but subsequent examination by the Laboratory shewed that no salmonella or shigella groups were discovered in the patients' faeces. No food was available for examination.

F. CAUSES OF DEATH DURING THE YEAR

	1969			Total Total	
	Male	Fem	Total	1968	1967
Tuberculosis - all forms	0	0	0	0	1
Other Infective illnesses	0	1	1		
Malignant neoplasm				32	18
Lung and bronchus	4	4	8	5	3
Breast	0	1	1		
Uterus	0	3	3		
Prostate	2	0	2		
Stomach & Intestines	3	0	3		
Leukaemia	0	0	0	1	1
Other sites	7	4	11		
Diabetes mellitus	1	2	3		
Other endocrine etc. diseases	0	1	1		
Ischaemic heart disease	27	17	44	42	43
Cerebrovascular disease	12	21	33	45	51
Other heart & arculatory system diseases	11	22	33		
Influenza	2	1	3	4	0
Pneumonia	4	5	9	6	11
Bronchitis and emphysema	3	1	4		
Other diseases of respiratory system	1	0	1		
Ulcer and diseases of digestive system	0	2	2		
Other diseases of liver and intestines	0	0	0		
Diseases of kidneys and genito-urinary system	1	0	1		
Congenital anomalies & other causes of perinatal mortality	2	0	2		
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	1	1	2		
Motor vehicle accidents	0	1	1	1	0
All other accidents	1	4	5		
Suicide and self-inflicted injuries	0	0	0	3	2

ESTHER JACKSON
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

